

My Prayer Journal

Use this weekly prayer to help you begin your time with God each day.

Prayer of Confession: Lord, we read Your Word but don't live it. We study Your Word but don't adhere to it. We allow Your Word to inform our minds, but we fail to allow it to transform our hearts. Forgive us when we have been consumers of Your Word, hearers but not doers. Reform our ways and transform our lives by Your Living Word, Jesus Christ.

My Prayers this Week:

Family Time:

If someone asked you to name everyone in your life who has been part of your learning what it means to follow Jesus, who all would you name? Maybe you would include your parents, your grandparents, your brothers, and sisters, your LW Kids teachers, your pastors, or your friends. The writer of a book in the New Testament called "Hebrews" wants us to remember that all the stories we have in the Bible about people who put their faith in God are also supposed to help us to learn how to follow Jesus! Stories of people like Noah, Abraham, Moses, David, and even Jesus Himself help us to see how real people put their faith in God, so that we can be encouraged in our faith, too. Now that you've thought of people in your own life who have taught you about God, see how many Bible characters you can think of who have also taught you what faith in God looks like!

MONDAY 11.7.22

Hebrews 11:1-7

For this week following All Saints' Sunday, we are going to read through the "Roll Call of Faith" from the eleventh chapter of Hebrews, and consider the "great cloud of witnesses" the author talks about in Hebrews 12:1. All Saints' Day provides us with an opportunity to remember our own loved ones who have preceded us in death, and how they have influenced our own faith journeys. This is precisely what the author of Hebrews is doing in chapter 11 of his letter—reminding us of our own "family members" in the Judeo-Christian tradition whose biblical stories are also meant to positively influence our faith lives. And so he begins at the beginning: THE beginning, and the persevering faith of God's people that our God is the Creator God. The author also mentions the faith of Abel, the first human to fully trust in God's providence by sharing the very best results of his livelihood with God, Enoch, whose righteous life of faith was rewarded by God by being taken up into heaven without experiencing death, and Noah, whose actions proved his willingness to believe the Word of God. These examples teach us to trust God with the product of our work, that God rewards all who seek to live in relationship with Him, and that we can be saved by believing in God's Word.

- Who in your own life has demonstrated these truths?

TUESDAY 11.8.22

Hebrews 11:8-19

It should not be a surprise to those familiar with the Old Testament that Abraham, the first patriarch of Judaism, occupies twelve of the verses in the "Roll Call of Faith." Unlike other major Old Testament figures in this chapter, several examples of Abraham's faith are lifted up as role models for us. Abraham picked up and left when God said "Go"; he settled in a foreign land among people who did not worship his God; he believed God's promise that in spite of his and his wife's age they would have innumerable descendants; and yet, he was willing to sacrifice his future, his promised son Isaac, when God tested him by asking him to. These specific examples from the life of Abraham should force us to consider: where is God calling me to go that I have never been before? Am I willing to do life among people not like me so that they can see the true God in the way I live my life? What has God promised me that I am not sure I can believe—and do I believe it anyway? Might God be asking me to sacrifice something dear to me, so that I can demonstrate my unwavering allegiance to Him and Him alone? Over a lifetime, opportunities to demonstrate our faith in God in these ways are sure to arise. The Roll Call of Faith teaches us to expect them, and to grow in faith as a result.

- What examples occurred to you as you read this section?

WEDNESDAY 11.9.22

Hebrews 11:20-28

Abraham's descendants come next in our "faith family history" - Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph. For each of these, the example of faith that is lifted up comes from the end of their lives. Faced with their own mortality, each one offered prayers and blessings over their children, passing the faith on to the next generation of Israelites—Isaac to Jacob, and Jacob to Joseph and Joseph's sons. Joseph then, on his deathbed, reminded his family that even though they were living in Egypt, they must trust in God's promise to his great-grandfather Abraham, that the land of Canaan would one day be restored to the family. The Roll Call of Faith then moves on to the one who through whose faith God would accomplish that restoration—Moses' parents, and Moses himself. Moses' parents' faith led them to defy the king of Egypt and hide their baby boy, while the faith of Moses himself enabled him to forego the lavish riches of Egyptian royalty, live in disgrace in the wilderness instead, and ultimately to believe God when He promised that the blood of a lamb would save the Hebrew babies from death. The stories teach us: those with Godly faith pass it to the next generation, do what's right even when pressured to do wrong, forego riches, and always trust in the blood of the lamb.

- Who are you passing your faith on to?

THURSDAY 11.10.22

Hebrews 11:29-31

While the first example of faith in today's reading is the pivotal moment in the book of Exodus—the faith required for the people of Israel to pass through the walls of the Red Sea on dry land with a pursuing army behind them—the other two examples come from the book of Joshua. Interestingly, the Roll Call of Faith in Hebrews 11 is one of *very few* New Testament texts to mention Old Testament people from outside of the Torah (Genesis through Deuteronomy) or quoting from the prophets! But the story of the falling down of the walls of Jericho, in which God gave Israel a victory over their enemies, is a premier Old Testament example of faithful obedience. At Jericho, the people did no more and no less than God demanded when seeking to defeat their enemy. And even though Jericho was utterly routed, one family of inhabitants, that of the prostitute Rahab, was saved because they were the only ones in the entire city to proclaim faith in the God of Israel prior to the city's destruction. Each of these three examples of faith demonstrate the power of faith in God in the midst of our enemies' strongest challenges. A powerful pharaoh and a powerfully fortified city are no match for our God. Through faith, we can survive even the deepest threats.

- When has your faith helped you overcome adversity?

